Applicants : Patrick D. Blattner et al.   Attorney's Docket No.: 06975-534001
App. No. : 10/747,701
Filed   : December 30, 2003
Page   : 2 of 14

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This Listing of Claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method for animating a first avatar based on perceived animation of a second avatar, the method comprising:

graphically representing a first user with a first avatar capable of being animated;

graphically representing a second user with a second avatar capable of being animated wherein communication messages are being sent between the first user and the second user;

receiving an indication of an animation of the first avatar;

accessing information associating animations of avatars;

identifying, based on the accessed information, an animation for the second avatar that is responsive to the indicated animation of the first avatar; and

in response to ~~and based on~~ the received indication ~~of the animation~~, animating the second avatar based on the identified responsive animation.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein receiving the indication of an animation comprises receiving an indication of any type of animation of the first avatar.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein receiving the indication of an animation comprises receiving an indication of a particular animation of multiple possible animations of the first avatar.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising animating the first avatar in response to and based on the animation of the second avatar.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the first avatar is animated in response to a particular portion of a message sent between the first user and the second user.

6.   (Original)   The method of claim 5 wherein the first avatar is animated in response to a particular portion of a message sent from the first user to the second user.

7.   (Original)   The method of claim 5 wherein the first avatar is animated in response to a particular portion of a message sent to the first user from the second user.

8.   (Original)   The method of claim 1 wherein the first avatar is animated to send an out-of-band communication from the first user to the second user.

9.   (Original)   The method of claim 8 wherein the out-of-band communication comprises a communication indicating an environmental condition associated with the first user.

10.   (Original)   The method of claim 9 wherein the environmental condition comprises an environmental condition related to weather occurring in a geographic location near the first user.

11.   (Original)   The method of claim 8 wherein the out-of-band communication comprises a communication indicating a personality characteristic associated with the first user.

12.   (Original)   The method of claim 8 wherein the out-of-band communication comprises a communication indicating an emotional state associated with the first user.

13.   (Original)   The method of claim 8 wherein the out-of-band communication comprises a communication indicating a setting characteristic associated with the first user.

14.   (Original)   The method of claim 13 wherein the setting characteristic comprises a characteristic related to time of day of the first user.

15.   (Currently amended)   The method of claim ~~12~~ 13 wherein the setting characteristic comprises a characteristic related to time of year.

16.   (Original)   The method of claim 15 wherein the time of year comprises a holiday.

17.   (Original)   The method of claim 15 wherein the time of year comprises a season wherein the season is one of spring, summer, fall or winter

18.   (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~12~~ 13 wherein the setting characteristic comprises a characteristic associated with a work setting.

19.   (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~12~~ 13 wherein the setting characteristic comprises a characteristic associated with a recreation setting.

20.   (Original)   The method of claim 19 wherein the recreation setting comprises a beach setting or a tropical setting.

21.   (Original)   The method of claim 19 wherein the recreation setting comprises a winter sport setting.

22.   (Currently amended) A system for animating a first avatar based on perceived animation of a second avatar, the system comprising a processor connected to a storage device and one or more input/output devices, wherein the processor is configured to:

graphically represent a first user with a first avatar capable of being animated;

graphically represent a second user with a second avatar capable of being animated wherein communication messages are being sent between the first user and the second user;

receive an indication of an animation of the first avatar;

access information associating animations of avatars;

identify, based on the accessed information, an animation for the second avatar that is responsive to the indicated animation of the first avatar; and

animate the second avatar, in response to ~~and based on~~ the received indication ~~of the animation,~~ based on the identified responsive animation.

23.   (Original)   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor is configured to receive an indication of any type of animation of the first avatar.

24.   (Original)   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor is configured to receive an indication of a particular animation of multiple possible animations of the first avatar.

25.   (Original)   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor is further configured to animate the first avatar in response to and based on the animation of the second avatar.

26.   (Original)   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor is further configured to animate the first avatar in response to a particular portion of a message sent between the first user and the second user.

27.   (Original)   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor is further configured animate the first avatar to send an out-of-band communication from the first user to the second user.

Applicants: Patrick D. Blattner et al.
App. No. : 10/747,701
Filed   : December 30, 2003
Page   : 6 of 14

Attorney's Docket No.: 06975-534001

28.   (Currently amended)   A computer-readable medium ~~or propagated signal~~ having embodied thereon a computer program configured to animate a first avatar based on perceived animation of a second avatar, the ~~medium or signal~~ <u>computer program</u> comprising one or more code segments <u>that when executed are</u> configured to:

graphically represent a first user with a first avatar capable of being animated;

graphically represent a second user with a second avatar capable of being animated wherein communication messages are being sent between the first user and the second user;

receive an indication of an animation of the first avatar;

<u>access information associating animations of avatars;</u>

<u>identify, based on the accessed information, an animation for the second avatar that is responsive to the indicated animation of the first avatar;</u> and

animate the second avatar<u>,</u> in response to ~~and based on~~ the received indication ~~of the animation,~~ <u>based on the identified responsive animation</u>.

29.   (Original)   The medium of claim 28 wherein the one or more code segments configured to receive the indication of the animation of the first avatar comprise one or more code segments configured to receive an indication of any type of animation of the first avatar.

30.   (Original)   The medium of claim 28 wherein the one or more code segments configured to receive the indication of the animation of the first avatar comprise one or more code segments configured to receive an indication of a particular animation of multiple possible animations of the first avatar.

31.   (Original)   The medium of claim 28 wherein the one or more code segments are further configured to animate the first avatar in response to and based on the animation of the second avatar.

32.   (Original)   The medium of claim 28 wherein the one or more code segments are further configured to animate the first avatar in response to a particular portion of a message sent between the first user and the second user.

33.   (Original)   The medium of claim 28 wherein the one or more code segments are further configured to animate the first avatar to send an out-of-band communication from the first user to the second user.

34.   (Currently amended) A system for animating a first avatar based on perceived animation of a second avatar, the system comprises:

means to graphically represent a first user with a first avatar capable of being animated and graphically represent a second user with a second avatar capable of being animated wherein communication messages are being sent between the first user and the second user;

means to receive an indication of an animation of the first avatar;

means to access information associating animations of avatars;

means to identify, based on the accessed information, an animation for the second avatar that is responsive to the indicated animation of the first avatar; and

means to animate the second avatar, in response to and based on the received indication of the animation, based on the identified responsive animation.

35.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the first avatar and the second avatar are graphically represented on a first system, and wherein the accessing comprises accessing the information associating animations of avatars in a system other than the first system.

36.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein accessing information associating animations of avatars comprises accessing information associating animation triggers.

37.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the identifying comprises:

identifying a pair of animation identifiers based on the indicated animation of the first avatar, the pair of animation identifiers including a first identifier associated with the indicated animation of the first avatar and a second identifier associated with the responsive animation for the second avatar.

38.   (New) The system of claim 22, wherein the processor is configured to identify an animation for the second avatar by identifying a pair of animation identifiers based on the indicated animation of the first avatar, the pair of animation identifiers including a first identifier associated with the indicated animation of the first avatar and a second identifier associated with the responsive animation for the second avatar.

39.   (New) The medium of claim 28, wherein the one or more code segments configured to identify an animation for the second avatar comprise one or more code segments configured to:

identify a pair of animation identifiers based on the indicated animation of the first avatar, the pair of animation identifiers including a first identifier associated with the indicated animation of the first avatar and a second identifier associated with the responsive animation for the second avatar.

40.   (New) The system of claim 34, wherein the means to identify comprises:

means to identify a pair of animation identifiers based on the indicated animation of the first avatar, the pair of animation identifiers including a first identifier associated with the indicated animation of the first avatar and a second identifier associated with the responsive animation for the second avatar.